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In conjunction with this book the Sonet record company have issued a series of LPs of recent recordings of bluesmen such as Bukka White, Champion Jack Dupree, Big Joe Williams and Lightnin' Hopkins. A total of twelve artists are represented and an LP is devoted to each. In addition there is a sampler record and two records called 'African Journey: a search for the roots of the blues'.

Speaking as a musician, I would have welcomed some attempt at integrating Charters' poetical studies of the language and aura of the blues with some discussion of the melodies and rhythms actually sung and played. The author makes the point himself on page 113 that, for a young white, the words don't carry the emotional power that the music does, and although one chapter ('The Blues as Poem') consists of the words of several blues, they have little emotional effect when divorced from the aural experience.

The feeling of being in an ethnic minority is described from Charters' (white) point of view as an outsider in a black club on page 151: walk around parts of Bradford or Slough and you'll understand what he means. Every professional musician will recognise the insecurity of trying to get paid for something as intangible as music. This is conveyed most powerfully in a description of Champion Jack Dupree refusing to sing at a students' club until some guarantee of payment was made:

"Our talent is the only thing we got to get our money with, and it's no reason for us to give you our talent unless we get our money for it" (p.130).